

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: DPhil in Sociology



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time	Part Time
Expected length	3-4 years	6-8 years

About the course

The DPhil in Sociology provides academically outstanding students an unrivalled opportunity for those who would like to undertake original and independent research in preparation for an academic career and other research-intensive occupations.

The DPhil programme offers individualised training in sociological analysis to prepare you for academic life and the job market. You will develop your skills by undertaking empirical research under the guidance of an academic supervisor and by participating in the department's DPhil workshops and seminars. Apart from these DPhil-specific set of seminars, you will be given ample opportunities to present your work in the department, and to develop your research ideas and proposals with the advice and support of your peers. In addition, you will find a wide variety of courses, lectures and seminars taking place all over Oxford, that are relevant for your research and allow you to become a well-rounded sociologist.

As a research student, you will have the opportunity to be fully involved in the department's research environment, which is characterised by a rich tradition of methodologically rigorous empirical sociology. You will have the opportunity to attend regular weekly lunchtime sociology seminars with many interesting speakers participating. You will be exposed to cutting-edge research undertaken by your supervisor(s), scholars in the department and the many visitors that the department welcomes each year.

The DPhil is examined by a thesis, prepared under the guidance of one or two academic supervisors.

A broad range of sociological topics have been studied by the department's doctoral students. Research areas and specialisms include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Social Inequality and Stratification
- Social Mobility
- Education
- Gender and Family
- Demography
- Health and Health Inequalities
- Political Sociology
- Social Movements
- Organised Crime
- Cybercrime
- Quantitative and Qualitative Methods
- Computational Social Science
- Governance and conflict; and
- Sociology relating to specific countries or regions, such as China and Latin America.

Attendance

The course can be studied full-time or part-time with both modes requiring attendance in Oxford. Full-time students are subject to the University's Residence requirements. Part-time students are required to attend course-related activities in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year.

The full-time degree will be completed over three years. The part-time degree has the same requirements as the full-time degree, but is spread over six to eight years.

If you study part-time, you will be required to attend seminars, workshops, and other events related to your intellectual development in Oxford.

Departmentally scheduled events typically take place two days per week in the first term of your first year, and up to three days per week in the second term of your first year. You may be required to attend additional skills training courses during your first year. You will also be expected to attend the annual departmental DPhil Conference as an observer each year, and to present at the conference in the first term of your fourth year.

The degree is particularly well suited for students who are seeking the flexibility of part-time study. Part-time study also provides an excellent opportunity for professionals to undertake rigorous long-term research that may be relevant to their working life. For more information, please contact admissions@sociology.ox.ac.uk.

Resources to support your study

As a graduate student, you will have access to the University's wide range of world-class resources including libraries, museums, galleries, digital resources and IT services.

The Bodleian Libraries is the largest library system in the UK. It includes the main Bodleian Library and libraries across Oxford, including major research libraries and faculty, department and institute libraries. Together, the Libraries hold more than 13 million printed items, provide access to e-journals, and contain outstanding special collections including rare books and manuscripts, classical papyri, maps, music, art and printed ephemera.

The University's IT Services is available to all students to support with core university IT systems and tools, as well as many other services and facilities. IT Services also offers a range of IT learning courses for students, to support with learning and research.

The Social Sciences Library is the largest freestanding social science library in the UK, and is located in the Manor Road Building. Desk space is available in the Department of Sociology for DPhil students. Hot-desking areas with access to printing are also available in the department.

Supervision

The allocation of doctoral supervision is the responsibility of the Department of Sociology. Allocation takes place as part of the admissions process, and it is helpful for applicants to indicate their preferred supervisor on their application. Moreover, applicants are encouraged to discuss their research plans with potential supervisors in advance of making a formal application, although due to the number of enquiries we receive a response is not always guaranteed. It is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Department of Sociology. You can typically expect to meet your supervisor at least three times a term.

Assessment

All students will be initially admitted to the status of Probationer Research Student (PRS). Within a maximum of four terms as a full-time PRS student or eight terms as a part-time PRS student, you will be expected to apply for, and achieve, transfer of status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil status. This application is normally made in the third term for full-time students and in the sixth term for part-time students.

Students who are successful at transfer will also be expected to apply for, and achieve, confirmation of DPhil status to show that their work continues to be on track. This should be done within nine terms for full-time students and eighteen terms for part-time students, though this application is normally made in the sixth term for full-time students and in the twelfth term for part-time students.

Full-time DPhil students are typically expected to submit a thesis after three or, at most, four years from the date of admission. If you are studying part-time, you be required to submit your thesis after six or, at most, eight years from the date of admission. To be successfully awarded a DPhil in Sociology, you must defend your thesis orally (*viva voce*) in front of two appointed examiners.

Changes to this course

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out above. However, there may be situations in which it is desirable or necessary for the University to make changes in course provision, either before or after you commence your course. These might include significant changes made necessary by any pandemic, epidemic or local health emergency. For further information, please see the University's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>) and our page on changes to courses (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges>).

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2025-26

Full-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£11,790
Overseas	£29,350

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£5,895
Overseas	£14,675

Information about course fees

Course fees are payable each year, for the duration of your fee liability (your fee liability is the length of time for which you are required to pay course fees). For courses lasting longer than one year, please be aware that fees will usually increase annually. Information about how much fees and other costs may increase is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>).

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional cost information (below), course fees do not cover your accommodation, residential costs or other living costs. They also don't cover any additional costs and charges that are outlined in the additional cost information.

Graduate students who have reached the end of their standard period of fee liability may be required to pay a termly University and/or a college continuation charge.

The University continuation charge, per term for entry in 2025-26 is £672, please be aware that this will increase annually. For part-time students, the termly charge will be half of the termly rate payable by full-time students.

If a college continuation charge applies (not applicable for non-matriculated courses) it is likely to be in the region of £100 to £600. Please contact your college for more details, including information about whether your college's continuation charge is applied at a different rate for part-time study.

Additional cost information

Full-time study

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees (or, after fee liability ends, continuation charges) and living costs. However, please note that, depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel, accommodation and living expenses, insurance premiums and, where appropriate, visa and medical fees (eg for vaccinations). Costs can vary considerably according to the duration and location of the fieldwork, but the department would generally expect the cost of such field research to range from £200 to £1,000. If you choose to collect your own data, you may also incur transcription costs. There may also be costs if you choose to acquire quantitative data from non-ESRC sources. The department has no funds available to help with these costs, however, you may be able to apply for small grants from your college to help you cover some of these expenses.

Part-time study

Please note that you are required to attend in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year, and you may incur additional travel and accommodation expenses for this. Also, depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur further additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, and field trips. You will need to meet these additional costs, although you may be able to apply for small grants from your department and/or college to help you cover some of these expenses.

Living costs

In addition to your course fees and any additional course-specific costs, you will need to ensure that you have adequate funds to support your living costs for the duration of your course.

If you are studying part-time your living costs may vary depending on your personal circumstances but you must still ensure that you will have sufficient funding to meet these costs for the duration of your course.

The likely living costs for the 2025-26 academic year are published below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford. We provide the cost per month so you can multiply up by the number of months you expect to live in Oxford.

Likely living costs for one month

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£330	£515
Accommodation	£790	£955
Personal items	£200	£335
Social activities	£45	£100
Study costs	£40	£90
Other	£20	£40
Total	£1,425	£2,035

Likely living costs for nine months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£2,970	£4,635
Accommodation	£7,110	£8,595
Personal items	£1,800	£3,015
Social activities	£405	£900
Study costs	£360	£810
Other	£180	£360
Total	£12,825	£18,315

Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£3,960	£6,180
Accommodation	£9,480	£11,460
Personal items	£2,400	£4,020
Social activities	£540	£1,200
Study costs	£480	£1,080
Other	£240	£480
Total	£17,100	£24,420

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond the 2025-26 academic year, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

More information about how these figures have been calculated is available at www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts.

Document accessibility

If you require a more accessible version of this document please contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email (graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk) or via the online form (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/ask/form>).